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SUBJECT: UN BRIEFS ON UNAMA'S STRUCTURE, EXPANSION, AND
BUDGET

11. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST AND SUMMARY: On 30 July, the UN briefed members of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) on the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), specifically with regard to UNAMA's budget proposal, UNAMA's expansion, and aid coordination and effectiveness. UNAMA's recently submitted 2009 budget will retain its two-pillar structure (headed respectively by a DSRSG for Political Affairs and a DSRSG/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator). The UN reported that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) would retain its current position under the DSRSG/RC/HC. OCHA will increase in size to address urgent humanitarian issues. Russia, Iran, India, the UK, Italy, and France all expressed support for SRSK Kai Eide, UNAMA, and the decision to keep OCHA within UNAMA. The proposed UNAMA budget will be twice the size of the current 86 million USD budget, primarily due to a 40 percent increase in staff, security costs, and the costs associated with opening up six new provincial offices. Before the end of 2008 UNAMA will open two new provincial offices in Tirmidh (Uruzgan province) and Pul-i-Khumri (Baghlan province). By early 2009 UNAMA will open two more offices in Sar-i-Pul (Sar-i-Pul province) and Ghazni (Ghazni province). The last two offices will open by late 2009 in Lashkar Gah (Helmand province) and Farah Center (Farah province).

12. (SBU) Summary continued: After the UN's brief, Afghanistan PermRep Tanin expressed the government of Afghanistan's high regard for SRSK Eide, saying that Eide had "established himself as an effective leader" and "energized the offices of UNAMA with a revised structure." Tanin commended Eide on his regional efforts and his ability to align with Afghan leaders of government, and suggested that things are "moving in the right direction." ACTION REQUEST: During the meeting, the UN asked all JCMB countries to identify geographic locations in Afghanistan where we would like the UN Country Team to prioritize its efforts. Additionally, the UN would like to know whether we would prefer to fund various aid agencies individually or through a central trust fund. END ACTION REQUEST AND SUMMARY.

13. (SBU) On 30 July, the UN briefed members of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) on the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), specifically with regard to UNAMA's budget proposal, UNAMA's expansion, and aid coordination and effectiveness. UNAMA's recently submitted 2009 budget will retain its two-pillar structure (headed respectively by a DSRSG for Political Affairs and a DSRSG/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator), said Scott Smith, the UN's team leader on Afghanistan. Under this two-pillar structure, the aid coordinator, Mark Ward, will have a senior-level position, although it will be under the DSRSG/RC/HC. Ward will also gain a direct reporting line to Eide.

14. (SBU) The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) will retain its current position under the

DSRSG/RC/HC rather than assuming a quasi-independent role separate from UNAMA (as OCHA and other NGOs wanted). OCHA will increase in size from 36 personnel (16 international and 20 national) to 96 personnel (36 international and 60 national). The U.S., UK, India, Russia, and Iran all commended the decision to keep OCHA under UNAMA.

¶5. (SBU) The proposed 2009 UNAMA budget will be approximately twice the size of the current 86 million USD budget, primarily due to a 40 percent increase in staff, security costs, and the costs associated with opening up six new provincial offices. Smith estimates that the budget will be approved by November. He also reported that the UNAMA job vacancy rate is trending down, partially due to the positive effect of the recently approved UNAMA special allowance.

¶6. (SBU) Smith said that before the end of 2008 UNAMA will open two new provincial offices in Tirin Kot (Uruzgan province) and Pul-i-Khumri (Baghlan province). By early 2009 UNAMA will open two more offices in Sar-i-Pul (Sar-i-Pul province) and Ghazni (Ghazni province). The last two offices will open by late 2009 in Lashkar Gah (Helmand province) and Farah Center (Farah province). Smith acknowledged that it will take some time to fill the personnel requirements for each of these new offices.

¶7. (SBU) Smith reported that at the July JCMB meeting in Kabul, a decision was made to streamline consulted groups by developing three standing committees (one for security, one for governance/human rights/human law, and one for social and economic issues). Each standing committee will consist of a representative from UNAMA and the Afghan government. These

USUN NEW Y 00000697 002 OF 002

three committees will establish ad hoc task forces to address specific issues. UNAMA and the Afghan government are still addressing exactly how these standing committees will operate.

¶8. (SBU) Tanin stressed that the framework for the implementation and coordination of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) must be effective and capable of being monitored. He asked UNAMA to help the Afghan finance ministry with the implementation of the ANDS. Tanin expressed the government of Afghanistan's high regard for SRSK Kai Eide who he said has "established himself as an effective leader" and "energized the offices of UNAMA with a revised structure." Tanin commended Eide on his regional efforts and his ability to align with Afghan leaders of government, and suggested that things are "moving in the right direction." Tanin also applauded the decision to keep OCHA under UNAMA, saying that it is essential that the UN's operations in Afghanistan fall under a unified UNAMA.

¶9. (SBU) Russia, Iran, India, the UK, Italy, and France expressed their support for SRSK Eide, UNAMA, and the decision to keep OCHA within UNAMA. Iran commended Eide for his regional efforts, particularly his recent visit to Iran. Iran recommended that each JCMB member country bring a budget representative to the next JCMB meeting to help facilitate the approval of the 2009 UNAMA budget.

Wolff